United Nations A/62/153

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 July 2007

Original: English

Sixty-second session
Item 101 (d) of the provisional agenda*
Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly

United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report contains an account of the activities undertaken by the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific during the period from August 2006 to July 2007. The wide political support received from Member States and academic institutions within and outside the region has reaffirmed the role played by the Centre in fostering dialogue and cooperation in the field of disarmament and security in the region.

During the reporting period, the Centre continued to promote disarmament and security dialogue through the organization of conferences in the Asia and the Pacific region. Such conferences were organized in Yokohama, Japan, and Jeju Island, Republic of Korea. Until mid-September 2006, the Centre continued to provide substantive support to the five Central Asian States in connection with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia and to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status. The Centre also continued to encourage the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, as well as the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs has continued consultations with the Government of Nepal on the relocation of the Centre. On 13 July 2007, the Office was informed by the Government of Nepal of its concurrence with the draft host country agreement and the related memorandum of understanding and its readiness to sign the two documents. A signing ceremony subsequently took place at United Nations Headquarters on 20 July 2007.

* A/62/150.

07-44053 (E) 200807

I. Introduction

1. In paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of resolution 61/94, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities; urged him to complete, without any further delay, the internal procedure for finalizing the host country agreement and the related memorandum of understanding and to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively; and requested him to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The report covers the activities of the Centre during the period from August 2006 to July 2007. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre covering the year 2006 is contained in annex I. A list of planned activities of the Centre for which financial support from interested donors is being sought appears in annex II. In addition to the Trust Fund for the Regional Centre, activities of the Centre may be funded from voluntary contributions to other disarmament trust funds managed by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

II. Activities of the Centre

3. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific continued to enjoy the strong support of Member States and academic institutions within and outside the region for its role in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue for the enhancement of openness, transparency and confidence-building and the promotion of disarmament and security. The regional meetings on various disarmament and security-related issues organized by the Centre have been highly commended by the General Assembly and the Asia and the Pacific community.

4. During the reporting period, the Centre organized, within the limited financial resources available through voluntary contributions of Member States and other interested organizations, a number of conferences, as described below.

A. Regional dialogue to address challenges in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation

5. The Centre has promoted regional dialogue aimed at identifying pressing disarmament and security-related needs relevant to the region and at encouraging region-oriented initiatives through the organization of meetings and conferences in the Asia and the Pacific region and by other means. The value of the dialogue has been acknowledged in General Assembly resolutions and strong support has been expressed by Member States and academic groups within and outside the region for its continuation as a way of exchanging data and information and exploring further collaboration for joint activities related to disarmament and security in the Asia and the Pacific region.

6. From 21 to 23 August 2006, the Centre organized, in Yokohama, Japan, in cooperation with the Government of Japan and the city of Yokohama, the eighteenth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, on the theme "Alarming nuclear proliferation crisis and regional and international peace and security". Approximately 50 participants from Governments, academic institutions, the media, international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in the Conference. The Yokohama Conference considered, inter alia, the problems and challenges affecting the nuclear non-proliferation regime; issues relating to compliance, verification, the nuclear fuel cycle and the peaceful use of nuclear energy; the nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran; and the nuclear black market. Nuclear issues affecting the Middle East, including the renouncement by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya of its weapons of mass destruction programme, were also discussed.

7. The participants highly commended the Conference as a useful contribution to the encouragement and promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation dialogue within and outside the Asia and the Pacific region. It provided participants with an opportunity to identify priorities in the field of weapons of mass destruction. The Conference was also useful in preparing the ground for the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

8. From 13 to 15 December 2006, the Centre and the Republic of Korea jointly organized, in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, a conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues on the theme, "Beyond the stalemate: revitalizing efforts to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery".

9. The fifth in a series of such annual regional disarmament conferences, it was attended by approximately 30 participants from Governments, academic and research institutions and international and regional organizations, as well as NGOs, mainly from the Asia and the Pacific region. The Jeju Island conference dealt with, inter alia, threats and challenges to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the global and regional contexts of North-East Asia; the erosion of confidence in the effectiveness of the Non-Proliferation Treaty; the threat of terrorism by means of weapons of mass destruction; non-compliance with Security Council resolutions and the recommendations of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); multilateral approaches to sensitive areas of the nuclear fuel cycle; and the strengthening of export controls.

10. Pursuant to requests by the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A, 55/33 W and 57/69 and to Assembly decisions 54/417, 56/412, 58/518, 59/513 and 60/516, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in connection with the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. On 8 September 2006, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the five Central Asian States signed, in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

11. In its resolution 59/73, on Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its nuclear-weapon-free status. In this connection, the Centre held consultations with Mongolia in August and September 2006 to assist it

in preparing a report on developments relating to the consolidation of its nuclear-weapon-free status.

B. Cooperation with regional and intergovernmental organizations and other relevant actors

12. The Centre maintained cooperation with regional and intergovernmental organizations, including the Pacific Island Forum and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as with academic institutions and NGOs in the Asia and the Pacific region, by inviting them to participate in meetings organized by the Centre on security and disarmament issues. The Centre participated in a workshop on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) organized by the ASEAN Regional Forum and held in San Francisco, United States of America, from 13 to 15 February 2007. The issues discussed by participants at the workshop were highlighted in the summary report of the co-Chair. They included key elements of resolution 1540 (2004) and the important role of regional organizations, national plans and national experiences in the implementation of the resolution, as well as next steps. On the margins of the meeting, the Centre held consultations with some South Pacific States on organizing a follow-up subregional seminar on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in the South Pacific.

13. With respect to disarmament and non-proliferation education, in the course of 2007 the Centre held consultations with ASEAN member States, Central Asian States and South Pacific States to assist them in building capacity for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

14. During the reporting period, the Centre invited disarmament-related international organizations, including IAEA, the secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, to participate in a number of the conferences that it organized, with a view to sharing expertise among participants.

C. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions

15. In the period under review, the Centre invited the members of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) to participate in conferences and workshops that it organized. Further, a representative of the Centre attended the Council's third meeting of experts dealing with export control and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which was held in Tokyo from 8 to 10 February 2007, and made introductory remarks on the resolution. The Centre also participated in the work of the CSCAP Study Group on Countering the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Asia Pacific, which met in San Francisco, United States, from 11 to 13 February 2007. The Centre made a presentation highlighting the role of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in assisting the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and the engagement of the Office in outreach activities and capacity-

building for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The participation of the Centre in both meetings helped it to better understand the needs of the States in the Asia and the Pacific region.

16. On 21 and 22 June 2007, the Centre participated in the Sixth North Asian Regional Meeting of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, co-hosted by the Mongolian chapter of that organization and by Blue Banner, another Mongolian NGO, in Ulaanbaatar. The meeting focused on Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, the long-term consequences of nuclear-weapon tests in the western part of Mongolia, experiences gained from the Chernobyl accident, single-State nuclear-weapon-free zones, and the idea of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in North-East Asia. A representative of the Centre made a statement at the opening session about its role in assisting States in their efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

17. Furthermore, as a means of promoting cooperation between the Centre and its stakeholders, the Centre provided substantive advice and technical assistance to the prefecture and city of Nagasaki, Japan, in organizing the fourteenth United Nations and Disarmament Symposium, on the theme "Multiple challenges to the Non-Proliferation Treaty regime today", which was held in Nagasaki on 24 and 25 August 2006. Devoted to the topic of disarmament and non-proliferation education, the symposium provided a forum for the citizens of Nagasaki to learn about the various measures being taken by the international community towards the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. The Centre also provided technical and substantive support to the United Nations Association of Japan in organizing two annual symposiums. The first symposium, on the theme "Security in North-East Asia: the implications of the nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea", was held in Kanazawa, Japan, on 16 November 2006. The second symposium, on the theme of "The initiation of renewed dialogue on North-East Asia", took place in Saitama, Japan, from 25 to 27 June 2007. The main objective of the symposiums was to promote regional dialogue in North-East Asia addressing security concerns, challenges to non-proliferation regimes relating to weapons of mass destruction, the global energy situation, unusual weather patterns and the current situation in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The symposiums adopted a road map to address regional disarmament-related issues in North-East Asia in the coming years.

D. Outreach and information activities

18. The Centre regularly updates its website to keep the public abreast of its activities. In addition, a brochure providing information on the activities of the Centre and its main objectives is currently being revised and will be distributed to participants in meetings and conferences organized by the Centre and to Member States.

19. On 11 April 2007, in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of its establishment, the Centre organized the screening of a documentary entitled *Hiroshima Ground Zero* at Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium at Headquarters. The documentary used three-dimensional computer graphics to recreate, on the basis of the memories of survivors, images of Hiroshima before its destruction by the atomic bomb. In connection with the screening, the Centre also organized, in

collaboration with the United Nations Correspondents Association, a press conference in honour of Masaaki Tanabe, Producer and Director of the documentary, who donated the film to the United Nations on behalf of the Restoration of Sarugaku-cho Film Committee. In a letter addressed to the Mayor of Hiroshima, the Secretary-General expressed his sincere appreciation to the Film Committee and to Masaaki Tanabe for the donation, and stated that he believed the hibakushas' message that "No one else should ever suffer as we did" should be shared by all peoples of the world.

III. Relocation of the Centre

20. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continued its consultations with the host Government of Nepal on the relocation of the Centre to Kathmandu. Since my previous report (A/61/163), both the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding have been revised to take into account the new requirements of United Nations security standards and norms, as well as the corresponding updated installation and operating costs to be borne by the host Government. The updated draft host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding were transmitted by the Office to the Government of Nepal on 27 November 2006. The Office was informed, in a letter from the Permanent Representative of Nepal dated 13 July 2007, that the Government of Nepal concurred with the two documents and was ready to sign them. The host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding were signed by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and the Permanent Representative of Nepal on behalf of the host Government at a ceremony at Headquarters on 20 July 2007, paving the way for the relocation of the Centre to Kathmandu.

IV. Staffing and financing

21. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations might make to that end. In resolution 61/94, the Assembly expressed its appreciation for the continuing political support and voluntary financial contributions to the Regional Centre, which are essential for its continued operation. It also appealed to Member States, in particular those within the Asia and the Pacific region, as well as to international, governmental and non-governmental organizations and foundations, to make voluntary contributions — the only resources available to the Regional Centre — so as to strengthen the Centre's programme of activities and the implementation thereof.

22. During the reporting period, voluntary contributions in the amount of $38,870 were received. That figure does not include an amount of $20,000, which was received on 28 December 2006 and was recorded in 2007. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of China, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Thailand for their contributions.

23. The Secretary-General also wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of the Republic of Korea and of Japan and to the city of Yokohama,

Japan, for their financial and technical support for the United Nations conferences organized by the Centre during the past year.

24. The Centre's current staff consists of the Director and one General Service staff member. One Associate Expert post remains available to the Centre; the Centre is seeking the assistance of Member States in identifying suitable candidates to fill that post with a view to strengthening the Centre's capacity to implement its mandate.

V. Conclusions

25. The Centre continued to implement its mandate in promoting regional and subregional dialogue on security and global and regional disarmament issues, as well as to serve as an instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation and disarmament in the region. During the reporting period, the Centre's activities focused specifically on addressing issues relating to challenges to the non-proliferation regime, the effective implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the full implementation of the Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as well as on assisting Member States in the region to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and on promoting the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

26. In order to promote further cooperation, the Centre continued to expand its contacts with academic institutions, foundations and regional and subregional organizations within the Asia and the Pacific region, as well as with disarmament-related international organizations. The Centre also continued to raise public awareness about challenges, developments and trends in the field of disarmament and security in the region. The Centre further expanded its outreach to its constituencies through the updating of its website so as to provide information on its role and various activities.

27. In order for the Centre to ensure its operational sustainability and to fulfil its mandate, increased and sustained financial support from Member States and interested organizations is essential. The Secretary-General urges Member States, in particular those in the Asia and the Pacific region, to continue to provide or to increase financial support, including core funding, to the Centre in support of its programmes and activities, especially at this time when the Centre is preparing to relocate to Kathmandu.

28. The Secretary-General welcomes the signing of the host country agreement and the memorandum of understanding between the United Nations and the Government of Nepal and looks forward to the relocation of the Regional Centre and its subsequent effective operation from Kathmandu.

Annex I

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for 2006[a]

	United States dollars
I. Fund balance as at 1 January 2006	159 700
II. Income	
1 January-31 December 2006	
Voluntary contributions[b]	38 870
Interest income	7 009
Miscellaneous income	—
Subtotal	**45 879**
III. Expenditures	
1 January-31 December 2006	48 326
Programme support	6 282
Subtotal	**54 608**
IV. Fund balance, 31 December 2006	150 971

[a] Information based on the statement of income and expenditure for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2006.

[b] Includes contributions from China ($10,000), Kazakhstan ($20,000), Pakistan ($5,879) and Thailand ($3,000). Does not include a contribution from the Republic of Korea ($20,000) received on 28 December 2006, which will be recorded for 2007.

Annex II

Planned activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for which funding is sought

Project I

Title: The nineteenth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues

Purpose: To assist the Asian and the Pacific community in promoting dialogue on nuclear proliferation risks

Location: Sapporo, Japan

Duration: 3 days (27-29 August 2007)

Number of participants: 60 participants, including Government officials, academics and NGO representatives

Cost estimates

	United States dollars
Travel of participants	120 000
Travel of two or three staff members	25 000
Operating expenses	6 000
Programme support (13 per cent, rounded)	19 600
Total	**170 600**

Project II

Title: United Nations-Republic of Korea joint conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues

Purpose: Sixth regional disarmament conference to address security concerns in North-East Asia, including nuclear non-proliferation and missile issues

Location: Seoul, Republic of Korea (to be confirmed)

Duration: 3 days (December 2007 — exact dates to be determined)

Number of participants: Approximately 30 participants, mainly from the Asian and the Pacific region

Cost estimates

	United States dollars
Travel of participants	100 000
Travel of 2 or 3 staff members	25 000
Operating expenses	5 000
Programme support (13 per cent, rounded)	16 900
Total	**146 900**

Project III

Title: Workshop to promote the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education in Central Asia

Purpose: To assist in capacity-building and encourage States to implement the recommendations contained in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education

Location: Central Asia (venue to be determined)

Duration: 3 days in 2008 (dates to be determined)

Number of participants: 16 participants, including Government officials from the Central Asian States and representatives of international and non-governmental organizations

Cost estimates

	United States dollars
Travel of participants	21 500
Travel of three staff members	23 300
Operating expenses	10 500
Programme support (13 per cent, rounded)	7 200
Total	**62 500**